

INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT WITH VOLUNTEERS PROJECT PROPOSAL

Refuge/Wetland Management District: Mid-Columbia River NWR Complex

Name of Project: Mapping of Invasive Plants and Monitoring of Efficacy and Impacts in Support of Invasive Control and Rehabilitation Projects

Total amount requested: \$11,500

Project Description (20 Points):

1. **Invasive Species Treatment, Control, and/or Restoration:** n/a

2. **Public Outreach and/or Environmental Education:** n/a

3. **Survey, Inventory, and/or Post-treatment Monitoring:** The proposed project will be to recruit and train full-time volunteers for two primary purposes. The first will be to locate and map populations of invasive plants as part of a larger station-sponsored program to describe and treat multiple invasive species on Complex refuges. This larger station-sponsored program involves the formation and support of a weed treatment “strike team.” The mapping efforts will be used to document and describe infestations and to reduce the strike team’s search times, increasing their ability to control targeted species at the best biological time. The second purpose will be to collect efficacy and impact information from past treatments, including past strike team efforts and other station-sponsored projects. Training of the volunteers in the operation of GPS equipment, weed identification, monitoring protocols, and data management will also develop a pool of trained individuals for future invasive plant management activities. GPS/GIS technologies and a customized data dictionary will be used to inventory and map the location of invasive species populations on refuge lands. The combination of the proposed project and the station-sponsored strike team will help document, monitor, and reduce the incidence of invasive species on refuge lands as a step in the recovery of native shrub-steppe, wetland, and riparian habitats, and will help to evaluate and inform refuge management actions.

Friends Groups and other Volunteers (10 Points): To support the proposed project, the Complex will recruit volunteers from the Friends of Mid-Columbia River Wildlife Refuges, the Columbia Basin Chapter of the Native Plant Society and local/regional college and university biology departments to fill volunteer positions needed to monitor weed control work performed in past years and to map new sites in advance of the Complex strike team’s 2014/2015 work seasons. The Complex will also team with the local county weed control boards for training.

Other Partners (10 Points): The Complex will consult and where feasible team with county weed control boards for training and developing mapping targets.

Criteria for Project Success (10 Points): Mapping of 19 to 20 species of invasive plants by trained teams of volunteers on ~2,200 acres within ~26,000 acres across the Complex. Monitoring and assessment of selected variables for assessment of past refuge-sponsored actions (2013 Strike Team targets, invasive fish treatments, BAR treatments).

Budget: \$11,500

Stipend: \$500/ month x 3 months x 6 volunteers = \$9,000.00

Teams of two volunteers housed at Complex bunkhouses (when necessary):

Complex south-end – Umatilla NWR (Irrigon, OR)

Complex north-end – Columbia NWR (Othello, WA)

Complex west-end – Toppenish NWR (Toppenish, WA) and/or Conboy Lake NWR
(Glenwood, WA)

Trimble GPS / TerraSync / Pathfinder Office training course = \$2,500